

L E T T E R S

ON THE

REAL CAUSES

AND

PROBABLE CONSEQUENCES

OF THE

P R E S E N T W A R

WITH

R U S S I A.

L O N D O N :

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ADVERTISEMENT.

MOST of these Letters were originally published in the ORACLE, and signed ALFRED.

Some of the Author's friends have expressed a wish to see them collected in the form of a volume.

The Author has contented himself with briefly stating some important facts and leading circumstances. His occupations at this moment do not allow him sufficient leisure to discuss them more amply.

The reader, it is hoped, will pardon the want of order, and other defects of composition, the consequence of a very hasty publication.

London,
10th March 1801.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

THE OFFICE of the ADVERTISER, is now
situated in the OLD CHURCH, and signed

John of the ADVERTISER, is now
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of a volume.

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of the most interesting facts and
circumstances. This collection of
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publish them more early.

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The consequence of a very early
edition.

London,
1791.

LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

MUCH has been said of the insanity of the Emperor of Russia; I wish the expression had never been used.—His conduct, however inconsistent in itself, and incompatible with the interests of his country, and the dignity and honour of a sovereign, will not bear that interpretation. According to Locke's definition, a madman is one who acts rightly on wrong principles; but by wrong principles, Mr. Locke means such as cannot be entertained by a sound mind.

The Emperor of Russia, who is allowed to be a well-meaning man, seems to act upon principles adopted by error of judgment, and which do not so much prove want of capacity to judge, as want of the

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exercise

exercise of the discriminating capacity he possesses, from a strange mixture in his character of suspicion and credulity, which renders him the dupe of those who, guided by private interest, swayed by weakness or by passion, or influenced by enmity to Britain, have had the means of conveying to him falsity in the shape of truth, and who have flattered his inordinate ambition and pride.

Such a man cannot be called an idiot or a madman, in the strict sense of the words, though his actions are often such as idiots and madmen commit.

In private life, indeed, actions so inconsistent would cause an individual to be held insane; but in private life a man has friends and enemies, who dare represent, remonstrate, advise, and reproach, and who will state facts, and explode falsities. But an Emperor of Russia, an autocrator, has friends who dare not, and enemies who cannot be heard. He is left entirely to himself.

A sovereign endowed with a great mind would be invigorated by so elevated a situation, and illumined by the information his means would procure him: He,

more than all others, would discover truth in its darkest recesses.

We may therefore safely conclude that the Emperor is not a great man, but that he is on that account the more to be dreaded by those who have only truth to rely on for a vindication of their conduct.

It is indeed lamentable that such a man should be placed in such a situation—it is lamentable that a situation should exist in which the caprice, the folly, the credulity, the ignorance, the weakness, or the anger of such a man should be able to convulse, perhaps to destroy nations, and to shed more blood and commit more injustice, than the most detestable monster that has stained the pages of history.

LETTER II.

THE beginning of the reign of Paul the First was marked by partiality to Great Britain. He had been seated but a few weeks on the throne when he signed the treaty of commerce; and so anxious did he appear to wish an union of interests between the two countries, that he rejected all the volumes on this subject which the different negotiations with the late Empress had produced, and signed, without the least alteration, the project laid before him by Sir Charles Whitworth.

Europe thought herself saved, when she saw him stand forward so nobly in the general cause, and so early.

It had been predicted by those who well knew the Court of St. Peterburgh, that the Emperor would not engage in a war until he had been crowned at Moscow, and until he had made some internal regulations, which he had much at heart. He, however, made preparations for assisting the Emperor of Germany, and when he saw

Vienna menaced, he silently caused an army to advance towards his frontiers. The courier who carried the news arrived forty-eight hours after preliminaries with Bonaparte were signed.

When Naples was in danger, he declared, in the most unequivocal language, to the Court of Vienna, that, if it did not break off its secret negotiations with France, and march an army to save that part of Italy, he would enter into such other engagements as should, without its assistance, effectuate that object. Austria, dreading an alliance between Russia and Prussia, immediately broke off the negotiation, and the French, either informed of what had passed, or foreseeing what would take place, did not wait to be attacked; they declared war against Austria.

The part he took in the war in Italy, and the glory which covered his arms until the fatal misunderstanding between the two courts, caused him to be looked to as the saviour of Europe; a title he might have preserved, and his name have been transmitted to posterity, conspicuously shining in the list of illustrious benefactors to man-

kind. Alas! he may now become one of its most cruel scourges.

He saw, he felt the noble, the heroic, the disinterested conduct of the British Court—the sacrifices it made for the general good, and for the preservation of its allies—its unviolated faith—the openness and candour of its declarations, and the firmness and loyalty of its actions. He stepped forward, as became him, to its assistance—but when his troops were hardly landed in Holland, he became dissatisfied with his ally. By the able and impartial statement of a great man (now in retirement) matters were adjusted, and he was pacified. He even again entered heartily into the cause, and was actually preparing a reinforcement to his army in Guernsey and Jersey, to make a descent on the coast of France, and march straight to Paris; but scarcely were the operations planned, when he abandoned them. He recalled his army in haste, and his warm friendship to Great Britain as suddenly turned into inveterate enmity.

Whatever reason he might have to be offended at the conduct of the Austrian Generals, of the Aulic Council, or of the court

court itself, the Emperor's desertion from the common cause was not justified by it. Instead of being the saviour, he was the betrayer of Italy. Had he never come forward to her assistance, Austria would not have been led into the snares where she was entangled. He stopped the torrent for a while, only, that it might rush down with more dreadful devastation.

The Austrian ambassador at St. Petersburg, Count Cobenzel, fell into such disgrace, that to visit him was in the Emperor's eyes a crime little short of treason. The British envoy thought he ought not to submit to so tyrannical a restraint. He visited Count Cobenzel, and was sent out of the country with a precipitation and an indecency, that shewed the degree of the Emperor's resentment, and the magnitude of the affront which he imagined had been offered to him.

The causes which gave rise to such conduct, undoubtedly merit investigation.

LETTER III.

THE Court of St. Petersburg has, ever since the reign of Peter the Great, constantly had in view the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the re-establishment of the Greek empire. It would be easy, in a retrospect of all the principal political transactions of that cabinet, to demonstrate, that that object was never lost sight of: indeed we must consider it as the leading principle of Russian politics.

But no sovereign pursued it so ardently, or had approached so nearly to its accomplishment, as the late Empress. Had she reigned but two years longer, it cannot be doubted that her grandson Constantine would now be seated on the throne of Constantinople.

While we favoured her views, she warmly espoused the cause of Great Britain; when we opposed them, she adopted every unfriendly measure short of open hostility.

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The public is informed of the history of these transactions*. The Empress, however, began to see the danger of Europe ; and when Count D'Artois visited St. Petersburg in 1793, she offered 12,000 men to be landed in La Vendee, with that Prince at their head. We differed with her for a mere trifle, and she could not again be brought to take part in the war. How unfortunate it was not to have accepted her terms, and thereby to have made her a principal in the war, at that early period, we have only to lament ; and that more so, as we know that, if once engaged in the cause, she would not have abandoned it. But our lamenting will avail nothing ; nor can blame be attached to ministers, attentive to economy, and not foreseeing to what a length the war would be protracted, or what accumulation of disaster would attend it. Those only can blame who foresaw all this ; and such prophets have not arisen in our days. Be that as it may, it was not attachment to this country in particular that caused her to
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* Survey of the Turkish Empire, &c. published by Cadell and Davies.

come forward at that period: for she continued to throw every clog in the way of our commerce, and shewed a backwardness to a closer political connection. At length, as she became more alarmed at the situation of Europe, and lost all hopes of the re-establishment of the French monarchy, she seemed more inclined to an union of interests with Great Britain. She signed a convention for continuing in force the treaty of commerce, which had been suffered to expire without renewal; and, in February 1795, a treaty of defensive alliance with this country was concluded, which was soon followed by the declaration, or triple alliance, by which the two Imperial courts and His Majesty became parties in all treaties concluded between any two of the powers. On this occasion a treaty concluded in 1777, between the two Imperial courts, was produced, and which had remained till that hour a secret. By this treaty all pretensions on the part of Russia to Holstein were given up, and the possession guaranteed to Denmark. I mention this circumstance now, because hereafter I shall have occasion to refer to it.

LETTER IV.

STILL the Empress gave no assistance, and seemed to look with indifference on the menacing attitude of France. The cause of her inaction was artfully withheld from His Majesty's ministers. It was at last, however, in a circuitous manner, explained to them, that nothing short of wholly abandoning the Turks would induce her to come forward in the common cause, and to attach her sincerely to Great Britain. There existed in the minds of some of the cabinet ancient prejudices, and fears of the aggrandisement of Russia; an aggrandisement which, I shall shew, would much diminish her strength. Others saw the imperious necessity as well as the wisdom of giving up what it was not our interest to support. Experience, I fear, will shortly teach us, that no measure we could have at that time adopted, would have been more for the true interest of Great Britain, than the assisting Russia (though neutrality alone was required of us) to place the Grand Duke Constantine on
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the throne usurped by the Ottoman sultans. One great man, who foresaw, long before it happened, the invasion of Egypt, and all its consequences; whose views embraced, not Europe, not the present moment only, but the universe and futurity, saw this matter in broad day-light, and ardently vindicated the system.

The Russian minister at this court (who had zealously laboured for many years to bring the two countries to a mutual understanding of their own interests, which are so nearly connected, that they may be said to be two provinces of one empire, and a war between them may justly be called a civil war, with respect to those interests) represented to his sovereign, with what authority it matters not, that the cabinet of St. James would, so far from opposing, see with pleasure the re-establishment of Greece as a free, independent state. This letter was no sooner laid before her, than she sent back the courier, with a voluntary offer of 65,000 men to march immediately under Suworow, to attack the French in Alsace. She did not even wait to communicate her resolution to the king's envoy, who was at that time at
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some distance in the country ; but an express was sent to inform him of what was done. The Empress had always supposed him a warm friend to Turkey.

The conditions of the treaty being arranged, it was drawn out and lay before her for signature, when she died of an apopleptic fit !

The post, as is customary, was stopped ; but a merchant at Riga found means to send an *estafette* to Hamburgh ; and Mr. Frazer (the King's minister) sent information of the event to Lord Malmesbury :—but the French also received the intelligence, and two days afterwards they broke off the negociation with his Lordship.

LETTER V.

ON the Emperor's accession to the throne, the king's ministers were informed that he was averse to the politics of his late mother, and that, above all, he disapproved of a war with Turkey.

Certain it is that he abolished a number of institutions of the late reign; that he remodelled the army; that almost all those who had been favourites or confidential servants of his mother were displaced from the offices they held, and those who had been disgraced or neglected were the first he provided for or employed: he carried this so far, that men, little better than criminals, found in the offences they had committed a title to reward and employment.

In some other things he acted with wise discrimination; he reformed a number of abuses; he established many judicious and salutary institutions, intermixed indeed with many ridiculous and fantastical regulations.

But

But there was nothing in all this that went farther back than his mother's reign : there was no symptom of his having rejected the system of politics which had unremittingly been pursued by all his predecessors, from the time of Peter the First.

It was expected that he would have restored the crown of Poland to Stanislaus ; but that would have placed him at a greater distance from Turkey. He left to his mother the odium of her measure, but he kept all she had acquired by it.

He paid great attention to the navy in the Black Sea : the person at the head of that department (Admiral Mordwinof), who had been always one of his favourites, was confirmed in his office. As he had been in the confidence of Prince Potemkin, and was in possession of all the plans of that able and singular man for attacking the Turks by land as well as by sea, he was sent for to St. Petersburg, and, after many interviews, he was sent back to his office, loaded with marks of favour. On his return, every effort was made to ameliorate the condition of the navy, and to put it in a state of offensive operation. This favourite

favourite Admiral was, however, some time ago, discharged the service, because some shells had accidentally taken fire and blown up a magazine.

Those who watched his actions, and attended to the conduct of his son Constantine, less on his guard, were convinced, that though the Emperor did not seem to think it was then the proper moment to attack the Turks, he had not rejected the idea. The king's ministers, however, were still informed that he was wholly averse to a rupture with Turkey.

Alarmed at the progress of the French, and sincerely detesting democracy in any shape, he stepped forward, as we have seen, in the general cause. He laid aside his enmity to the Ottoman Porte. He sent from Sebastopolis to Constantinople naval stores, and shipwrights and other workmen, to fit out the Turkish fleet, which was in the most deplorable situation; but while the Ottomans received this assistance, which did not go to the length of rendering their navy formidable to Russia, they exposed their weakness, and laid open to their enemy the mode of attacking them. The
rebel

rebel Passuwan Oglu was become so formidable to the Porte, that its best troops were employed either in acting against him in the field, or guarding the capital and the provinces. The Emperor offered to "exterminate him." The Porte was wise enough on this occasion to refuse his assistance, under pretext that it could not call in unbelievers to destroy musselmans, until they had been, in consequence of their actions, declared by the Mufti fallen from the faith.

Those who had all along suspected the Emperor's ultimate views, when they saw him erect a small Greek republic, to which the Turks, with their usual imbecility, agreed, had no doubts left; and they were the more confirmed in the opinion they had formed the more they considered the locality of this new state, and recollected the history of the conspiracy of the Greeks, supported by Russia, in the last war.

The Emperor, however, kept his word with the Porte. His fleet returned to Sebastopolis. It is true, he caused it to remain in the Bosphorus until the Sultan had reimbursed what he thought proper to demand

for expences, as he did not choose to defer the payment to a future period.

Having, as he imagines, ended his engagements with the Turks, without any violation of good faith, he now declares to them, that if they permit the English to land troops in one of their provinces invaded by an enemy, to assist them in driving out that enemy, he should consider it as a declaration of war on the part of the Turks against him, the Emperor of Russia. And when does he make this declaration? at the time that the British troops had already failed. He was silent on the subject while the armament was fitting out, and its destination known. It is unnecessary to make any further reflexions on his conduct to prove the aggression to be wholly on his side; he seems to have made a point of it that it should be so considered: he seems to have lost sight of Peter the Great and Frederick the Great, his first models, and to have become ambitious of imitating, and even surpassing the Great Consul.

LETTER VI.

THERE was in the Russian army, in Holland, a strong party, if not in favour of the French, at least violently hostile to England; and these were joined by all those officers who preferred the parade of St. Petersburg to the field of battle in Holland, and who were not the least numerous.

General Herman was unfortunately made prisoner at the beginning of the operations. He declared publicly, as did several officers attached to him, that their misfortunes were owing to the officers not being at their posts to receive the orders he sent to them. But we do not want this testimony to prove their bad conduct. We know that some colonels were obliged to place sentries over their officers, to keep them to their posts. Some of the troops, totally abandoned by their officers, behaved very ill; but cowardice is not to be imputed to them, for their personal bravery cannot be disputed; but we also know the confidence they place in their officers, and that, as long as these remain

firm, their soldiers never retreat. One of these colonels was broken for cowardice, having rode off and left his regiment engaged with the enemy; but the army did not look on him as disgraced; he remained with it for several months, and associated with the officers as if nothing had happened. His regiment, when he left Guernsey, gave a *fete* to him, at which were present all the officers of the army. I need make no comment on all this.

General Van Dam came to the Russian head-quarters, in the disguise of an officer with a flag of truce, and staid all night with Lieutenant-general Von Essen, who made no report of this circumstance to the commander in chief. This fact owed its publicity to some papers falling into the hands of the Russians, among which there was a copy of the report of this transaction made to General Brune.

The disapprobation which the Emperor shewed of the management of the expedition arose from the misrepresentations of General Von Essen, and his party: His Imperial Majesty was afterwards pacified, as has been mentioned.

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In the beginning of the summer of 1800, the Emperor wished to know the dispositions of the cabinet of St. James with respect to Turkey; and he received assurances that it never would consent to any aggrandisement of Russia, or to the erecting a separate state at the expence of the Porte.

Through whatever channel the Emperor received this information, it appears certain he gave credit to it; and, I believe, it is equally certain that the King's ministers never had the least intimation of it from any quarter whatever.

At this period his enmity to Great Britain took its date. He recalled his army from Guernsey and Jersey, when they were preparing to invade France, and expecting reinforcements, and he shewed the greatest impatience to have it back in as short a time as possible. He expressed great apprehension that England would detain his army and his fleet, and all this without having assigned the least reason for his discontent or his fears.

LETTER VII.

THE Emperor of Russia has a peculiar method of diplomatic reasoning. It is quite new and original. It is neither *a priori*, nor *a posteriori*. It will be difficult to convey an idea of his logic without examples.

The 6th of last September he stopped all the British vessels in his ports ; but, probably, on reflecting that a British squadron might come and demand them, he took off the embargo a week afterwards. This measure had been talked of so early as in June. The 4th November, he thought himself secure, and he again seized all the British vessels and property in Russia, and confiscated the whole. The Danes, when they found themselves pressed to give an answer respecting their part in the armed neutrality, had applied to him—his answer was, that he could not then help them, as the time for his acting was not yet arrived.

When he found himself protected by the winter, which places an impassable barrier

round his empire, he declared that his hostility to the English was, that they had taken the island of Malta and not restored it to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of which, he assumes the title of Grand Master. Now Malta was taken after he first stopped British vessels ! He also insists on the validity of a treaty, because he proposed it. According to this project of a treaty, his fleet and army were to have co-operated in the reduction of the island.— This part of his own project he did not perform, and this failure alone would invalidate his claim.

He did not ask us whether we would give up Malta when we had taken it, nor had he received any refusal when he committed these violent acts of open hostility ; and he can produce no proof that we would not have given it up. God forbid that we should now ever give it up !

When Consul Shairpe was sent by government to St. Petersburg, he was told by Count Rastopchin, that the Emperor would not receive any person from this country, so long as the English interrupted the navigation of the Baltic. Malta was

not then thought of; and how, at that time, he could interpret our searching neutrals out of the Baltic an interruption of its navigation, is difficult to divine.

He stopped our vessels, and shewed his determination to quarrel with us, not only long before Malta was taken, but even while his fleet and his army were in our ports, and which the King, acting on principles of British faith, suffered to return.

Many of the vessels which carried home his troops are now confiscated by him, and the sailors detained in captivity. This was not acting on the principles of British faith.

He forms the armed neutrality, and equips a hostile squadron to support it, but never previously puts the question to this country, whether it will consent to the new code he proposes to dictate.

How this doctrine militates with his own practice, his solemn engagements by treaty, and with the law of nations, universally acknowledged for many centuries, has been too clearly proved in the speeches of ministers in the House of Commons, and in the open, just, and dignified official papers of
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Lord Grenville, to need any statement of mine.

The question, it is very plain, is not what is the law of nations, but the abolishing the law of nations, and the substituting an entire new code, hostile to the dearest interests of the British empire; and it rests with us to maintain, or to give up those laws, hitherto acknowledged by all nations, and acted upon as just, and, with them, to give up the envied superiority of our navy, the guardian of our empire, and, I may truly say, of the rights of mankind.

And who are they who make these demands? An association of weak powers, grown insolent towards us by the prosperity which our wars, for their existence as well as our own, have, by our indulgence procured them, united with their puissant and frantic neighbour, by whom they are too much over-awed to retract, even now, when they see the storm gathering, and the British thunder ready to burst on their heads, and annihilate their naval existence.

National honour, indeed, demands satisfaction for the insults we have received. It is

is so loudly demanded by the country, that no set of ministers can be doubtful how to act, nor any set of men be so openly their country's enemy as to dare oppose it.

It will answer no purpose to make animadversions on the negotiation at Copenhagen. The language of the Emperor to that Court was too plain to be misunderstood; but it is extraordinary that the Danes should at that moment come forward with a new question; which, however, was agreed not to be discussed until the end of the war.

It would be ridiculous to say more to prove that that after-pretext, Malta, was not the cause of the Emperor's inveterate hostility to Britain.

The fact is simply this:—The Emperor thought the time was now come for him to place his son on the throne of Constantinople. He was friendly to us, until he was told that the British Cabinet was inimical to his project. His son Constantine pressed him to the execution; he reminded him that he had already received the homage of deputies from Greece, which had acknowledged him as its Emperor; that Paul
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the First would have the glory of executing what Peter the First had planned, and what all his successors had been unable to perform.

At this moment the French, even more intriguing and more hostile to Britain than heretofore, found means to let the Emperor know that the First Consul would accept from Russia what the last King had refused, (Egypt and Candia)—that the consular power alone could, and alone would, co-operate with him in the accomplishment of his great object.

How the negotiation was carried on every body knows. A favourite valet-de-chambre, his French mistress, and a Swedish ambassador, furnished the means of communication.

But did our supposed opposition to his favourite project (for the question was never put by him to the King's ministry) justify him? Would our positive refusal of co-operation justify him in seizing and confiscating in his ports British ships and property? No. He has committed the most flagrant violation of every tie the most barbarous nations have ever held sacred, and
has

has since added to it fresh and unprecedented insults—and at the very time when he experienced from this country the most warm and cordial friendship. He has acted in direct opposition to that cause, of the justice of which he had so openly declared his conviction, and to defend which he had stood forward so nobly; he, a monarch, has fraternized with regicide and usurpation! Is honour, faith, and virtue, henceforth to reside only in these blest isles? Welcome, fair guests—a British king, and a British people, have ever loved, and will ever cherish you.

LETTER VIII.

It may be thought by those who are not intimately acquainted with the interior and relative position of Russia, with respect to commerce and navigation, that that country has really an interest, equal with that of Sweden and Denmark, in adopting the principles of the armed neutrality.

To state how that strange system came first to be pursued by the late Empress, would lead into details too long for my present purpose. A few facts will prove how diametrically opposite it is to the interests of Russia.

The Swedes and Danes have a great number of merchant vessels, they are reputed skilful sailors, and have long enjoyed the confidence of other nations as carriers. Their object is not so much to augment the number of their ships, as to maintain what they now possess, and to enrich themselves by acting either as carriers or as principals in trade with nations at war with Great Britain.

Russia, on the contrary, has not a dozen mercantile vessels, and of those *not two* navigated

vigated by *real Russians*. They have, indeed, given the Russian flag to a few Lubeckers, Hamburghers, &c. who, on account of a saving of duty in the Russian ports, have been induced to be naturalized, as long as it suits their purpose, and after that to retire to their own countries. Such vessels being to all intents and purposes foreign and not Russian, and their crews countrymen of the masters (and as such not acknowledged by Great Britain as real Russian ships) are no acquisition, or bring any advantage to the country which gives them its flag—it is no nursery for Russian sailors.

Russia, as long as its present system of internal government exists, can never have a mercantile navy: and to obtain that object it certainly will not change it. The peasants are all vassals or slaves, the property of the nobility, and a few of the crown, as much as their horses, and are bought and sold as if they were cattle. They constitute their riches; and by the laws of the empire, and the spirit of the government, neither they nor the free peasants can leave their own country. Sometimes it has happened, that

that masters of naturalized Russian vessels have obtained leave to take peasants; but the bond they are obliged to give, to the full value of the man, to bring him back, and which they forfeit in case of his deserting, and other embarrassing circumstances, have deterred others from following the example. As to men or boys going voluntarily to sea with the professed idea of becoming sailors, it is consequently quite out of the question. Hence it is evident, that Russia never can have sailors to man mercantile ships, had they skilful masters to navigate them.

With respect to their ships of war, they are supplied with recruits out of the country, in consequence of a requisition from the crown, in the same manner as the army is formed. It is on board their ships of war that they become sailors, such as they are. That their navy can never be an object of terror or jealousy to Great Britain, is obvious from this circumstance, and from the consideration that their ships are frozen up half the year, and during three (or four at most) summer months they sail up and down the Baltic, which is then mostly a mill-pond
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for its smoothness, compared with the stormy winter seas braved by the British tar. The unfrozen ports of the Black Sea, and the more independent nations in the South of Russia, promise more for the creation of a formidable navy, particularly if Russia have an establishment in the Mediterranean, and an inducement to navigate through the Bosphorus. But my present object is not to treat of the Imperial navy.

For would any merchant, when he could freight the vessel of an experienced Swedish or Danish master, manned with able seamen, think of hiring a Russian vessel wanting all these requisites? The object, therefore, of the court of Peterburgh, could then, no more than at present (if we will allow it common sense) be to protect, encourage, and augment its own mercantile navigation. It was then, and it is now, a pretext to vindicate a measure the most hostile to Great Britain, and, I may add, the most hostile to its own interests. That these are sacrificed to resentment, will prove to us to what a degree of inveteracy that hostility exists in the breast of the sovereign who adopted, or of the minister, if he was consulted, who advised them.

LETTER IX.

It is very evident that the custom of visiting neutral ships, as well under convoy as sailing alone, has, time immemorial, been authorized by custom, and has always been considered as the law of nations.

This right of visiting ships under convoy was never called in doubt until a few years ago.

Martens, who wrote expressly to vindicate the pretensions of neutral powers, says (in his *Essai concernant les Armateurs*, &c. 1795), “ According to treaties and custom,
 “ a mercantile vessel is obliged to submit to
 “ the summons of a cruizer or ship of
 “ war, and, in case of need, to be visited,
 “ infomuch, that if it attempts to escape it is
 “ allowable to fire a broadside at it to bring
 “ it to reason; and if it make defence in
 “ firing at the cruizer, this act alone suffices
 “ to condemn the vessel as a good prize,
 “ even though afterwards the neutrality of
 “ the vessel and cargo should be proved*.

* See Ord. of Spain 1718, art. 15; 1779, art. 6; France Ord. 1584. Ord. de la Mer 1681. In the art. Priner. Sweden Ord. 1715. Treaty between France and Hamburgh 1769, confirmed in 1789.

“ With respect to visiting, *there is now a*
 “ *days* a difference made between mercan-
 “ tile vessels navigating alone, and navigat-
 “ ing under convoy. In regard to these,
 “ according to a custom which appears
 “ *only to have been established since the two last*
 “ *American wars*, and which we find esta-
 “ blished *only by conventions and ordinances*
 “ *the most recent*, the cruizer may only, at
 “ most, send some of its crew on board the
 “ convoy to examine the papers establishing
 “ the neutrality of the convoy and of the
 “ vessels convoyed, and their cargoes (where
 “ the principle is followed that the ship does
 “ protect the cargo).” See Treaty between
 Holland and America, 1782. Prussia and
 Denmark, 1782. Austria and Russia, 1783.
 — France and Russia, 1787. Prussia and
 Sweden, 1787. Earlier we find no such
 stipulations.

The effect of a treaty can only be binding
 to the contracting parties, and can nowise
 affect or alter the established law of nations,
 from which these particular stipulations are
 deviations continuing in force only during
 the period such treaties exist. No treaty
 between two powers was ever understood
 to be binding to a third; it was reserved to
 the

the projectors of the armed neutrality to broach so inconsistent and ridiculous a doctrine. We might as well pretend that an act of the British parliament was a law for the guidance of the tribunals at Rome or at Pekin.

If a cargo of gunpowder, during a war between France and England, was sent to Portsmouth from Holland, or any neutral port, an English tribunal could not condemn it (if there was no act of Parliament against the importation of gunpowder) on the ground that it was imported contrary to the law of nations; for they do not extend to domestic regulations of internal policy; but if a French cruizer had met the vessel at sea, she would have been a good prize. A merchant might as well plead the law of nations to prevent a cargo of Italian wine being condemned that was, contrary to act of parliament, imported from Holland, because it is not contrary to the law of nations to bring Italian wine from Holland.

There are some other things which are so self-evident, and carry so clearly with them conviction, that they are conformable

to the spirit of the law of nations, that there needs no precedent to support their justice. For example: In time of peace the French prohibited the exportation to France of the products of their West India islands in foreign vessels. During this war they have allowed it for their own convenience. But the British government has condemned such neutral vessels as have been taken carrying French products from these islands, whether they really had been purchased by neutrals, or were still French property; because the French government itself considered this traffic as contraband, and only for its own convenience, which we are not bound to consider, allowed it in war time. Neutrals cannot, with justice, complain that we interrupted their trade, for this never was a branch of their trade: it was that of our enemies, which it was our business to destroy. Yet the doctrine of free ships making free cargoes, would authorize this trade, calculated entirely for the advantage of our enemies. Such neutrals, if allowed, would do us more harm than enemies, for of their ships we should stand a chance of capturing at least a part.

LETTER X.

PRUSSIA has also acceded to the armed neutrality. The conduct of the court of Berlin has been stigmatized for its perfidy, and it has been commended for its policy.

As to its policy, those who look forward but a few years must strongly doubt. Whatever aggrandizement it may acquire by spoil, it never can be safe between two such overgrown powers as France and Russia, whose alliance must always preclude the possibility of resistance in every other continental state.

That individuals sacrifice themselves to gratify revenge or jealousy is no uncommon thing; but that a cabinet, which we suppose composed of dispassionate men, in whom we look for no motor so powerful as interest, should have been blinded to the consequences which the ruin of Austria entrain with it, is truly astonishing; for Prussia, by suffering the annihilation of the power of Austria, has destroyed its own importance.

Prussia, from being once the arbitrator, is now become only the spectator of the destiny of Europe.

Whether, however, Prussia will so far enter into the conspiracy against Britain as to occasion a rupture, it seems at this moment, when so many considerations have great and contrary biases, to be difficult for us to decide; and, perhaps, while I should be weighing them, and stating my conjectures, the impetuosity of the Emperor may have forced the court of Berlin reluctantly to determine.

Had Sweden been forced into the measure of the armed neutrality, we might have pitied her. She is so much at the mercy of Russia, that, in every transaction where her dictatorial neighbour is concerned, we may reasonably be allowed to doubt of her liberty in choosing the line of conduct she pursues: but here she has obviously been the instigator, and where actions speak, conjectures are useless.

The late King thought differently with respect to Russia and this country. Whether his conduct, however, in consequence of his opinion, was prudent, is a question that
events

events have decided. Of the armed neutrality, when first proposed in 1780, we have his opinion on record in his own words. After enumerating the services Great Britain rendered to the late Empress, he says, "*What was the recompence? Desertion in the hour of danger, when England saw itself overwhelmed with enemies; and that armed neutrality, which deprived it of the foreign sailors it drew from the Baltic; which furnished Holland with a title to contraband, and a motive of rupture; which finally to procure to the Czarina the dignity of Protectress of the liberty of the seas, was, in reality, a mortal blow aimed at England.*"—And a mortal blow, no doubt, the young Prince aims too; but it will be fortunate for him if, between the vengeance of insulted Britain, and the friendship of Russia, he himself receive not a mortal blow.

Surely it would have been policy in Sweden to remain inactive, and to bear with christian patience the humiliation of its position; but it is its misfortune to have sovereigns who will be active. It sees in Russia a constant enemy—it hopes to see

her humbled and weakened by a war with Britain. But if the fleets of Russia are destroyed, will not its armies remain? Does it wish to see the British navy annihilated, that its ally, France, may be able to protect it? It would, with all the other states of Europe, rue the day that gave the sovereignty of the seas to France a republic, or to France a monarchy. And can any one who knows what has passed doubt of this?

LETTER XI.

THE armed neutrality, so opposite in its principles to those we have seen the Emperor profess, is evidently a measure he had recourse to, only to divide and weaken our naval operations, that he might with less danger of molestation pursue his projects against Turkey. It is, besides, violently hostile to his own interest.

Nor can we doubt that the possession of Malta was not the first cause of his enmity to this country ; but he has given that as an excuse, because he could not mention Turkey ; and he has gone to such extraordinary lengths in his assertion of his right to it as grand-master, that we can no more expect his retracting, than if it had actually been the sole cause of this enmity, which is carried to such a degree of inveteracy, that he sacrifices to it every consideration of his own interest, the interest of all the States of Europe, and of its sovereigns, of religion, of social order, of justice, and of morality.

Carried away by a rage so violent and inveterate, there is no setting bounds to the
 mischief

mischief the subtilty of his malice may devise, and the vastness of his means execute. Dreadful indeed to humanity is such a man in such a situation! He threatens two innocent nations, Portugal and Naples, with French plunder and destruction, if they refuse to join him in enmity to Britain. He lays aside his hatred to France, and sacrifices his own interest as well as that of others, to make that usurped government an instrument to assist him in his vengeance.

Let us coolly examine what he may do by sacrificing the greater part of a vast army; nor let us flatter ourselves that projects so wild and so ruinous will meet with opposition from the body of the nobility or the great officers of the empire. Such patriotic feelings as would expose them to the loss of their sovereign's favour are rarely to be found in a despotic government. There is as great an indifference to the success of public measures, as there is inability to oppose them.

He may make the Turks submit to his dictates, or he may drive them out of Europe in one campaign, if he embarks his army in ships, and lands them, as he may
with

with great ease, near Constantinople. If our navy prevents him sending his troops by sea, it will take him probably two campaigns.

In either case, he may endeavour to enable the French to keep possession of Egypt, and carry into execution their designs against India: immense would be the sacrifices he must make in an attempt so desperate, both from the length and difficulties of the march, and the number and bravery of our well-disciplined armies in India; but these sacrifices with him, if we are to judge of his future from his present conduct, would have little weight. This danger may to many appear chimerical: I forbear to enter into details I could state at great length; and, without affirming the feasibility or impracticability of the project, I can, I believe without risque of contradiction, assert, that great would be the expence, the alarm, and the inconvenience to which he would put this nation and its invaluable colonies.

He might send an army to Calabria, and, evading the vigilance of our ships, if they had no station in Sicily, get it transported

ported to that island. More difficult it would be to get it landed in Malta, but not impracticable with the assistance of a French fleet. The danger of this co-operation, at least, would necessitate the keeping a considerable naval force at Malta. Landed on the island of Malta, they probably would all perish by famine, and so would, first, all the inhabitants out of Valetta.

He might assemble an army in Norway, and perhaps get a part of it landed in Scotland, while the French menaced us on the other side. All this, I trust, while we are united among ourselves, would be attended with no real danger, but certainly with a great deal of disorder and alarm.

It may be doubted whether the Danes and Swedes would permit a Russian army to enter their territories; and, unable to resist, and unwilling to provoke, it may also be doubted whether they will not.

But he may send his army to Holland, where the French will not be afraid to receive it. The Dutch must be passive. Will the King of Prussia permit them a passage? Situated between France and Russia, dares he

he refuse? The power of Austria disappearing, has left that of Prussia null.

Expeditions so far from home will require greater finances than Russia can furnish, with an income of only eight-millions sterling, and very little specie at present in the country. The Emperor, perhaps, may take some lessons from his friend the Consul, and put them in practice in Turkey. We saw in the last reign what resources a despotic sovereign can create. At the conclusion of the first Turkish war, when every body expected to see the treasury involved in difficulties, to the astonishment of all Europe, the Empress abolished a great number of taxes. The fact is, that at home there is no need either of gold or silver, but a sufficient quantity of copper to exchange small bank-notes, which are for as small a sum as five roubles (about ten shillings sterling), is all that is required. The largeagio which often exists in favour of silver or gold, is no proof of discredit of paper. The rouble of the country is the copper rouble, and there is noagio between copper and the paper which represents it, except now and then a small temporary
local

local agio in favour of the one or the other, which happens in some part of the country to be more scarce. As to the question of discredit, or paper losing its value, that never is the case in Russia. No man thinks of enquiring, or dares enquire if he thinks, whether there is money in the bank to answer the issue of its notes. The bank-notes are issued by government as its money, and must be taken; and what reason could a man have to scruple taking what none dare refuse receiving from him in payment? Whenever government wants money, it issues bank-notes. A capital is thus created, which bears no interest. When it recovers from its embarrassment, a part of the paper is destroyed. These Russian notes are in such credit, that they pass in Moldavia and Wallachia, and other neighbouring countries, though prohibited to pass the frontiers in or out.

Siberia furnishes from its mines, principally of Nerzhinsk, a considerable quantity of gold and silver, and a part of the duties on importation are paid in foreign silver; so that all the coin government may hoard up may be employed in foreign expeditions.

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I have thus given the utmost extent to the danger which threatens us, and which, by ignorance and contempt, may be greatly augmented. What is foreseen may always be lessened, and often avoided.

LETTER XII.

WE have, however, no reason to despair, or to be dejected. Our naval superiority, which will even be increased, if we are lucky enough to meet the fleets of our new or our older enemies, will secure us from invasion, and *qui mare teneat, eum necesse rerum potiri*. Should we sacrifice our rights, or suffer them to be trifled with, our forbearance will be construed pusillanimity, both at home and abroad, and depress the noble and heroic spirit of our seamen.

Our trade, though we be shut out from many ports, has still a large field for extension; and it cannot be doubted but that many new channels will be opened to us for the supply of naval stores, which will in future have this important effect, that it will render us more independent of Russia, which will, whatever may be her successes in war, lose greatly by the consequences of her rupture with this country.

The importance of Malta to Great Britain at the present moment, and at all future periods, until France shall have lost all
means

means of annoying us in India, is properly felt. Should we be shut out from every port in the Mediterranean, still it would become the emporium of a great commerce; and, being a free port, it will be resorted to by all nations who are in want of our manufactures, and of a market for their own articles—no prohibitory edicts, no guardacostas, can prevent this traffic. It is a station for our fleets and our armies. In the possession of France, neither India nor our commerce in the Mediterranean, would be secure; and Turkey would be still more exposed than she is at present. The navigation of Russia in the Black Sea, as well as the Archipelago, and the other ports of the Mediterranean, would depend on the indulgence of France, and thus Russia would find an interest in her friendship. In our possession, we can annihilate or set bounds to the commerce of France in the Levant, and prevent her armies passing to Egypt. Many more advantages might be pointed out, and the dangers of ceding it to any other power be more fully exemplified; but it is too strongly felt in this country for it to be requisite to say more.

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If we do not keep possession of it, it is at least necessary for our safety that it be in the hands as neutral as were the knights; but where is such a neutral power now to be found?

After the French, by treachery, got possession of Malta, several of the dispersed knights went to Russia. Count Lita was at the court, in quality of ambassador from the Grand Master, to solicit the restoration of the commanderies the order had possessed in Poland before the last partition. These knights, probably with no farther view at first than to pay their court to the Emperor, and to procure pensions, proposed to elect him Grand Master. His Imperial Majesty, however, was flattered with the idea, and proposed that the seat of the order should be in Russia. The knights proceeded to a trial of the late Grand Master, which concluded with his deposition. The whole of this transaction was contrary to the statutes of the order, and consequently illegal. In the same manner, without regard to any one of its statutes, and without his having any single qualification essentially

essentially necessary to the office of Grand Master, the Emperor was elected.

The election of the Emperor, however invalid, was of important service to the order. He preserved them their commanderies in some foreign countries, and prevented the Order itself from extinction.

This title, which in him at first proceeded from mere vanity, or perhaps a better motive, became, by degrees, his hobby horse. He caused the arms of the order to be quartered in the Imperial escutcheon among those of the provinces of the empire. The standard of the order is constantly placed on one of the bastions of the citadel in the Imperial residence. He appears often at court in the habit of the order; and distributes the cross to Russians and foreigners as a mark of his favour. He inserts his new title in all public acts; and the island of Malta is guaranteed to him in all treaties, of which it is now a condition *sine qua non*.

After having gone to such lengths in committing himself, there is no probability of his ever renouncing his claim to the Grand Mastership of the order of St. John

of Jerufalem, and he may, as far as concerns this country, be left in quiet poffeffion of the title and the government of the Order ; but the poffeffion of the ifland of Malta is quite a different queftion, involving many momentous confiderations.

If he have no other political view—if Malta be really the pretext for quarrelling with us, and not the fupposed oppofition to his defigns againft Turkey—if he do not wifh poffeffion of the ifland of Malta as a means of obtaining and of fecuring an aggrandizement in the Eaft—if he only really wifh the re-eftablifhment of the Order, and the acknowledgment of his Grand Mafterfhip, why is he anxious to have that ifland? Can he not as well eftablifh the feat of the Order in the Crimea, or at St. Peterfburgh, as he firft propofed, or in any other place, as well as at Malta? The Order has a prior and a better claim to Acrida, and to Rhodes, and either of thefe the Emperor may eafily obtain, and procure the guarantee of other fovereigns.

If he only wifhes well to the knights, the lefs expenfive their eftablifhment is, the better it is for them. The Order drew no
 2 advantage

advantage from the island of Malta, except the security its strength afforded them. It was, on the contrary, a great expence to them: and as to their cruizes against the Turks, they were become a perfect farce. The gallies went out at regular periods, to make what they called a caravan, or cruize. This was a party of pleasure to Sicily, and along the coast of Italy. It was, however, necessary, according to the institutes of the Order, as no one could be a knight of justice (the only knights who were monks and *members* of the Order) till he had made three caravans. All the prizes that have been made for a great number of years were made by the privateers of merchants and other adventurers.

The Order was of use to the Maltese, as the annual revenues of the Order which came to the island amounted to a considerable sum*; and this benefit they may carry with them to the Crimea, or wherever they may fix their residence.

When the Emperor accepted the Grand Mastership, he could have had no idea of ever possessing Malta.

* About £. 400,000 sterling.

LETTER XIII.

IT is not easy to conceive that the Emperor of Russia can make any claim to the island of Malta, in consequence of the title he has assumed of Grand Master of the order of St. John of Jerusalem.

The institution of the Order is not attached to, or dependent on, any particular local residence. It has been established at other places before it was seated at Malta. On the knights being driven out of Rhodes, the Emperor Charles V. gave them possession of Malta, reserving the suzerainty; and to preserve this right, the Grand Master paid, and continued to the last to pay, to the viceroy of Sicily the annual tribute of a falcon. The Grand Master was stiled Prince of the islands of Malta and Goza; and he alone, independent of the Order, governed the inhabitants of the island.

The knights having, contrary to their engagement with the Emperor Charles V. to defend it to the last extremity, given up the island to the French in the most scandalous

dalous and traiterous manner, and ceased to pay the annual tribute to the viceroy of Naples, have lost all claim to it. We took it from the French, and hold it by right of conquest.

As to the Emperor of Russia, whatever title His Imperial Majesty may be pleased to assume, he neither is, nor can be Grand Master of the Order; nor will the acknowledgment of all the sovereigns of Europe of this title, in his person, (which, however, has not been the case with all of them) confer it.

According to the statutes of the order, the Grand Master must be a Roman Catholic; he must prove a noble descent by the male and female line of a certain number of generations; he must have become a monk, and have taken the vows; he must have made his three caravans (or cruizes) against the infidels, and have served other offices in the order; and, lastly, he must have been elected according to forms prescribed by the statutes of the order, in a chapter held by all the lay-brothers and priests of the Order (or canons) in the place where the Order has its fixed establishment. The forms to be observed on this occasion, and the election of electors to elect other elec-

tors, are so numerous, that it would require some pages to describe them; and they all are fundamental laws, coeval with the establishment of the Order: nor could the smallest of them be violated, without the election becoming void and null. The Pope, with the consent of the whole Order first obtained, alone could grant a dispensation. The Emperor of Russia might with as much propriety stile himself General of the Jesuits or Franciscans.

Some mistakes have been made with respect to the cross of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, (for he does not call it the Order of Malta,) which the Emperor of Russia has bestowed with so liberal a hand.

During the existence of the Order under a Grand Master, a knight before he could be admitted must have proved a noble pedigree on the male and female side; nor were his proofs admitted until a commission of the Order had made the necessary perquisitions in the country where his family resided. These were called *Cavalieri di Giustizia*, or *Knights by Justice*.

The cross or badge of the order was conferred by the Grand Master on such persons as were recommended to him by sovereigns,

vereigns, and in this case it was expressly forbidden to make any inquiry into their birth, or even to receive any proofs of their nobility. These were called *Cavalieri di Grazia*, or *Knights by Favour*. But persons thus decorated had no concerns with the religious and military institutions of the Order, or were considered as belonging to it. More might be said on the distributions of these crosses, but thus much will suffice for our purpose.

What we mean to infer is, that the number of knights being diminished by deaths, and disqualification by their conduct, the Emperor cannot create such knights as have a right to vote at the election of a Grand Master, or to consider themselves as knights of the religious and military Order of St. John of Jerusalem. As every sovereign has a right to create orders and confer honours in his own dominions, we cannot refuse to acknowledge as knights those whom the Emperor has created, but we must consider His Imperial Majesty's knights as belonging to a new order of knighthood, perfectly distinct from that of the Romish church. They are knights of the Russian Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

LETTER XIV.

THE answer to every overture that has of late been made by his Majesty's ministry to the court of St. Peterburgh, has been constantly, that "*the Emperor would hear of nothing: there was no mention made of Malta.*"

If he wants our concurrence to re-establish the Order, and secure to it its revenues; if, farther, he wants to drive the Turks out of Europe, and to re-establish the Greek empire (an event by no means prejudicial to the interest of Great Britain, if done with her concurrence) we may agree to his proposals, and the Emperor will find it more his interest to unite with Great Britain in the accomplishment of these views than with France; but he must guarantee Egypt from the possession of the French.

Of the sincerity of France the Emperor may judge. The First Consul made an offer of Malta to the Emperor, and he, *without communicating his intentions to this Court*, (which, as things then stood, was a very strange line of conduct) fitted out a squadron to go and take possession of it. When his
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ships,

ships, with a Russian governor, (who was not one of the old *baillis* of the order) were arrived at Constantinople, the admiral learnt that Malta had surrendered to the English. The Emperor should know, that the same person who had offered Malta to him, at the same time offered it to England, and the French commandant had orders to deliver it up before the Russians arrived, which order was punctually obeyed, though he might have held out three or four weeks longer, which was sufficient time for the Russians to arrive. Buonaparte too, made it a condition that the Russians should not be admitted into Malta, nor permitted to enter the Archipelago.

There has been a proposal sent to this country, which coming from a person who has acted a great part on the theatre of Europe, I shall mention, leaving it to others to guess whether it was a project of his own imagination, or whether the insinuation came to him from a still higher personage.

This project was, that the King should give up to the Emperor, as head of the Order, the city of Valetta, the great port,
and

and all the fortresses adjacent. That the King should retain possession of the south-east port (Marfa-Scirocco) on the other side of the island, and any other part of the island necessary for the purpose of maintaining a fleet. Had the proposition been reversed, it might with safety have been accepted by the King. Why should it not be acceptable to the Emperor? The Order has no occasion for Valetta, nor the great port, nor the impregnable fortresses. The island would be sufficiently guarded by a British fleet and garrison. The Order would have more of their revenue to spend. Marfa-Scirocco is sufficiently large for their navy; which might, however, with safety be admitted into the great port, provided we occupied the fortresses. They might even have one of the sinuses of the great port—they might occupy, without any danger to us, all that part of the suburbs and the works on the left of the great port, opposite Valetta; or they might reside at Medina, in the heart of the island, and near the delightful Bochetta.

If, therefore, government think it worthwhile to try whether any such compromise will

will satisfy the Emperor, there are materials enough for negotiation, and to discover his real sentiments.

It is dreaded by some that Russia may acquire too much power by the expulsion of the Turks from Europe, and the re-establishment of the Greek empire, under an independent sovereign; but to others the reverse appears to be the consequence. The Turks, a feeble power, were to her a useful barrier. The Greeks will become more formidable and more commercial, and will never be dependent on Russia, the government of which they abhor. As to any attachment of its sovereign, history teaches us how far that extends. Constantine, if we are not mistaken in his character, would forget his alliance, as soon as he found himself on a throne.

Certain it is that Poland was infinitely more useful to Russia before the partition than at present; though the people incorporated into that empire are less miserable.

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APPENDIX.

*Extract of a Letter from the BAILLI
DE TIGNIE to the COUNT DE LITTA,
formerly Ambassador from the Order to
the Court of St. Petersburg.*

“ MONSIEUR LE BAILLI,

“ IT is necessary for you to know the real causes of the destruction of an Order to which you gave splendor, which you would have defended, which would have served you so faithfully, and which would still exist, if it had a chief equal to you in virtue and in courage. I am to give you an account of the various reasons which occasioned our dishonourable surrender.—
1st. The feeble and stagnant state of the government of the late Grand Master, the
Prince

Prince de Rohan, who suffered principles to be inculcated destructive of all governments: he suffered to be put in almost all administrative places, persons attached to French doctrines, and who received gratuities for their tri-coloured pursuits. 2d. We elected Ferdinand Hompesch, because he appeared to possess noble and courageous sentiments; but we cannot believe that it was his wish to preserve us. You will be persuaded of it, when his conduct is explained in the manner which I shall relate. It is he who has destroyed the Order by his selfishness, his cowardice, and perhaps by his perfidy. 3d. We have been betrayed by those members who had the direction of the finances, the fortifications, and the artillery, such as Ranfinjeat, Touffard, Fai, and Bardonenche. 4th. The rich inhabitants, barons, and merchants of Malta, have shewn the utmost ingratitude; they caused the knights of Malta to be assassinated, by the report that they meant to give up that place to the French. 5th. The King of Spain, whose duty and interest it was to protect the Order, had insidiously given the place up to the French, his minister Amat having

having signed the arrangement of its surrender, which was made under his mediation.

“ The knights were persuaded that Ferdinand Hompesch would have made a change in the persons who governed under Rohan; but he in a servile manner followed in the footsteps of his feeble predecessor. Hompesch had no confidence but in those who were distinguished for their democratical principles. In the month of January, 1798, the Directory sent to Malta a person of the name of Pouffieulque, in order to organize an insurrection. This emissary lived at the house of a namesake of his, who was a rich banker, and also captain of the harbour. Pouffieulque saw both in private and in public the democrats of the country: he gave orders to Caruson, the French consul at Malta, to write out a list of the Maltese who wished for a change of government, and who promised to revolt whenever the French gave notice; and he commissioned his agents to inscribe their names on the books of the Consul of France. Hompesch suffered these proceedings to go on even after he was apprised of them by the

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Grand Cross, and by the letters of Pouffieul-
que, which had been shewn to him. M.
le chevalier O'Hara was informed of them
at the same time, and can give a full ac-
count of them.

“ In the beginning of the month of
March, of this year, Admiral Bruyes, with
a squadron of twelve ships of war, appeared
before Malta, the coast of which he wished
to reconnoitre, and sent in a ship in want
of repairs, to which the Order commanded
that every assistance should be afforded.
The French fleet for eight days examined
every point on which a landing could be
made. The French agents disseminated
every sort of calumny against the knights
who commanded the maritime posts, and
whom, they persuaded the people of Malta,
were ready to betray them ; thus depriv-
ing them of all confidence. Then M. Amat,
the charge d'affaires of Spain, and the Spa-
nish knights, misrepresented the trifling
measures that had been taken for defence,
and gave the people reason to think that the
knights were divided in opinion. The French
consul, Caruson, informed Admiral Bruyes,
that a great number of the people would
join

join the French as soon as they attacked Malta. Every intelligence from Toulon, and the different parts of Italy, announced that the French were preparing a grand naval armament; that they had a vast number of transports, and a great train of artillery. Letters from Paris stated, that one of the principal objects of this expedition was the capture of Malta. The knights were uneasy, and wished to make preparations for defence; but nothing could draw Hompesch from his lethargy. The council of war was composed of the Neapolitan bailli Frizzarro, also B——a, &c. Le——, the commander, a German; the bailli Saoufa, a Spaniard, whom the Order deprived of his command; and the bailli of La Tour du Pin, a Frenchman, a good officer, loyal, brave, and attached to his Order; of the commander Bardonnanche, who was director of the artillery; of the commander Touffard, who was director of the corps of engineers; of the chevalier de Fai, a Frenchman, who was director of the fortifications, and the waters of the fountains and cisterns. I have already mentioned, that the three last were in agree-

ment with Pouffieulque, had received money from him, and a promise of being employed in the service of France. The bailli of La Tour du Pin was of opinion, that they should put themselves in a posture of defence, construct pallisadoes, prepare carriages for guns, and provide every thing for the ordnance mines, which are so particularly well formed at Malta to prevent a landing; that they should exercise the militia, and establish subordination amongst them, place guns upon the ramparts, recall into the city the powder magazines, which were at Cotoner, and furnish the forts with provisions; but he could gain nothing either from the council or the Grand Master, who had the right of ordering every thing. The commander de Rosan, a good artillery officer, the same who directed the last siege of Mahon, delivered several excellent memorials to Hompesch upon this subject, which were not at all listened to. Hompesch did not quit his palace except to the processions, where he obtained the applause of the high populace; but he was never seen exercising the troops, nor in the arsenal, nor in

in any fort, and he invariably maintained the same kind of conduct.

“ On Wednesday, the 6th of June, there appeared before Malta a part of the French convoy, composed of 70 transports and some frigates, which waited the arrival of the rest of the army, commanded by Buona-
parte. This caused an increase of uneasiness amongst the knights and the inhabitants, who were not in the conspiracy. They wished immediately to put themselves in a posture of defence. In time of peace the command is entrusted to different persons; the head of the tongue (or nation) of Auvergne, called marshal, had the command of the city, and the seneschal of the militia of the country; but when the Order was threatened, the council nominated a general, but the command was not given to him, consequently, the seneschal, Prince Camillus de Rohan, a man of straw, commanded the militia; every thing was under the orders of the bailli Tomasi, a man of merit, but who never served but at sea, and the bailli of Clugni, a brave old man, seventy-two years of age. It was under such chiefs that a conflict must be maintained against French

generals, young and enterprising. On Thursday M. Aidot, the French General who commanded the convoy, wrote to the consul Caruson, that his appearance before the port of Malta might create uneasiness ; but that he might assure the Grand Master that nothing hostile was intended against Malta, the friend of the French Republic ; and this assurance calmed the minds of the people.—In fact, the Order was at peace with the French Republic, whose ships received from it all the assistance they had occasion for, On the same day a ship of the line, and a frigate belonging to the Order, returning from Sicily, passed through the French fleet in a quiet manner, which gave a fresh assurance that the peace would not be violated, In fine, on Saturday, the 9th of June, arrived the remainder of the army and squadron, commanded by the celebrated Buonaparte, who at four o'clock at noon required, through the medium of the consul Caruson, that there should be received into the port of Malta the whole armament, consisting of 18 ships of the line, 90 other vessels of war, corvettes, frigates, gun and bomb boats, and 300 transports, with
50,000

50,000 men of the best troops of France. This immense fleet extended itself from Goza to Marfa Scirocco, and threatened at the same time all parts of the island which were accessible to an attack.—The Grand Master assembled the council, which answered by a letter, praying Buonaparte to put his demand in writing, observing to him, that the laws of the Order, and the rights of neutrality, did not allow them to admit more than four ships at a time, and that the safety of the Order equally required it. The council finally added, that the Order was always in peace with France, which had not ceased to give it assurances of its friendship. The council sent this sort of supplication at five in the evening to the French consul Caruson, who took it to General Buonaparte, on board the L'Orient. He at the same time delivered to him the list of the Maltese who promised to join the French, and who were determined to massacre the knights, if they attempted to make a defence. The signal was to be the first bomb-shell which Buonaparte should fire against the town. The number of the Maltese conspirators amounted to 4,000.

“ When it was observed, about seven in the evening, that Buonaparte did not send back the consul Caruson, it was then only that they made preparations for defence. There was reason to believe that the attack would be made the next day. Orders were given for the militia to be armed, to make pallisadoes, and bring into the town the powder from Cotoner, operations which in quiet times would require, at least, eight days. As there was no commander in chief, no one could give orders, and the Grand Master never came out of his palace. The command of Cotoner was given to La Tour du Pin, with orders to remove the powder into the town; but he had not a person to execute these orders: he had more than 10,000 barrels of powder to transport further than half a league, and the harbour to pass through. This Grand Cross took with him sixteen knights, who collected 200 carriers, and the next day (Sunday), at four in the morning, they began this perilous operation. The commanders were as follow:—Prince Camillus de Rohan, commanding the militia and the country, having under him as lieut. generals

generals the baillis de Clagni and Tommas. The isle of Goza was commanded by its governor, Magrigni de Ville Bertin; the isle of Cumin by the chevalier De Valin; the Tour Rouge by the chevalier St. Simon, who, on seeing the French, immediately deserted to them: La Mehilla, by the commander De Bizien; St. Paul, by the chevalier Pleville (these two posts were under the command of the chevalier naval captain St. Felix); St. Thomas and Marfa Scirocco by the chevalier du Pin du Guerimere; the city of Valette by the bailli de Loras, marshal of the order; La Floriana by the bailli de Bellemont; Forts Manuel and Tigrie by the baillis Gorgon and le Tour St. Quentin; Fort Ricasoli by the bailli de Tillo; the castle of St. Angelo by the commander de Castillani; the Bourg, by the commander de Gondercourt; the isle de Sangle by the bailli de Tropes, a naval officer; Bourmola by the naval captain Sabeiras; Cotoner by the bailli de Tour du Pin, but no cannon; the bailli Tomasi wished to defend the entrenchments of Nasciar, but they took care to furnish him with no field pieces, nor with any other guns.

“ For

“ For the defence of the fortresses and seven leagues of coast, Mr. De Tignie tells us, that the whole force was 6,900 men. Buonaparte landed on the 10th of June, at seven different points, and met with little or no obstruction at his landing. The chief means of defence had been neglected, and particularly the fougasses (or mortars worked in the solid rock), had not been charged. The Grand Master made no effort to defend the island; nor did he use his influence, which was considerable, with the inhabitants. These people, for want of encouragement, fled like hares before the French; one hundred of these last, in one place, beat back 1,200 Maltese. So great was the loss from their timidity and want of exertion, that, by twelve o'clock at noon, there did not remain more than 4,000 men for the defence of the different posts; but even this force, if withdrawn from the several forts, no longer tenable, and concentrated in the town, would have enabled it to hold out two months, before which period, succour would have arrived.

“ The

“ The country people flocked into the town, in which there prevailed so much confusion, that the patrols fired upon each other. At last, on the 11th, in the morning, the Grand Master called together a few knights, and they resolved to capitulate; Mr. Hompesch thus neglected his duty to summon the grand council. At five o'clock in the morning of the 11th, all the forts received orders to fire no longer, and the whole island was soon after surrendered.

“ Thus fell, after so feeble a resistance as scarcely to deserve the name, the strong place of Malta. In it were found 30,000 muskets, 12,000 barrels of powder, provisions for six months, two ships, one frigate, three galleys, and other small vessels of war; three millions of livres in gold and silver; all which became the property of the French. Ferdinand Hompesch asked nothing for the Order, or the Knights; but he obtained good conditions for himself, viz. 600,000 livres in ready money, and a pension of 300,000, till France should procure him a sovereignty. The French thus treated the Grand Master
more

more liberally than many sovereigns, whom they have deposed.

“ On Tuesday the 12th of June, before Buonaparte entered the town, he ordered Mr. O'Hara, minister of Russia, to leave Malta within three hours, which order included all the Russian knights, except St. Priest, who signed the capitulation, and had permission to remain with the Grand Master—He had rendered too much service to the French not to deserve some preference. The traitorous knights who conspired to betray the place, were rewarded by offices under the French; among whom Borredont Ransinjeat was made president of the municipality, having for secretary a man named Doublet, a known democrat, who had been secretary to the Grand Master.

“ Buonaparte caused it to be signified to the knights, that he would give employment to such as would go along with him. In consequence, forty-eight enlisted under his banners and went on the expedition to Egypt; of whom two-thirds were young men of very good principles, but who thought themselves dishonoured, and that they

they would be employed no where else.—
On Tuesday the 19th, the French armament departed on the grand expedition, and the next day the port of Malta was opened, and vessels suffered to go out."

Mr. De Tignie concludes his letter in the following affecting terms:—" Nothing can equal my regret; but death will soon put an end to my misfortunes. I have been witness to the destruction of my Order; I have seen the demolition of the most venerable pieces of art, precious relics of antiquity, statues of gold and silver; I have beheld the annihilation of the arms of our brave predecessors, which were spared even by the Turks at Rhodes. I am more than eighty years old, and loaded with infirmities. I had asked to be placed upon the ramparts, that I might have shewn a good example. I have not seen the particulars of the treaties which Homspech made. They will perhaps be kept secret; but he should be interrogated respecting facts of public notoriety; he should be asked, why he kept in the place persons noted for their attachment to the French; why he prevented the fou-
gasses

gaffes from being loaded; why he did not remove the powder into the town; and why he did not victual the forts? He can make no excuse for omitting these things, as several members of the Order put him in mind of them in writing. It is necessary that this letter should be made known and printed; and I wish this the more, as it will be the only punishment of the traitors and cowards who betrayed us. I have the honour to be, &c.

“LE BAILLI DE TIGNIE.”

*Protestation of the Grand Priory of
Russia.*

WE the Baillis, Grand Crosses, Commanders, Knights of the Grand Priory of Russia, and other Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, at an extraordinary assembly at the Priorial Palace of the Order, in the Imperial residence of St. Petersburg,

Obliged to turn our attention towards Malta, what profound grief must we not feel in beholding that antient and noble theatre of our glory, treacherously sold by a convention as null in its principles as it was infamous in its effects?—With what indignation must we not be transported, in reflecting, that after an insignificant attack of some hours, the cowards who bore the name of knights, surrendered that bulwark of christianity, which the example of their predecessors, and the sacred laws of honour, enjoined them to defend to the last drop of their blood, to Brigands, a hundred times more infidel than those against whom the duties of their profession armed them.

In

In the course of a war of seven centuries, the knights of St. John of Jerusalem experienced more than once the vicissitudes of fortune; more than once the alarmed christians beheld the shield, if we may so call it, of the faith broken between each of their defenders, and the entire Order preserving no other refuge but in the hearts of its knights. But the most noble efforts always signalized their different successes, and their glory was as respected in the most disastrous reverses, as it was splendid in their most brilliant exploits. Since its origin, the name of one traitor alone sullied the annals of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem; by what fatality do we now see it precipitated into the abyss of disgrace and ignominy, by those very persons whose duty enjoined them to preserve it. If the speedy punishment of Amaret did not remedy the evils which his perfidy occasioned, it at least testified the severity of the principles of that illustrious corps, and equitable posterity has poured with equal measure, glory! glory! upon Villiers de l'Isle Adam, and opprobrium upon his infamous adversary.

If

If it depends upon us at the present day to wash off in the blood of traitors, the crimes they committed, in shamefully bartering the ancient and superb inheritance of honour which our ancestors transmitted; let us at least shew with energy, the just resentment, hatred, and contempt with which their felony inspires us; let us reject with horror, the vile treaty which will dishonour them for ever, and devote them irrevocably to that remorse and infamy which for ever be their portion.

For ourselves, united under the glorious auspices of Paul I. the august Emperor of all the Russias, and the protector of our Order, we protest, in the face of God, and in the presence of all those with whom honour and fidelity are still regarded as virtues, against every thing that perfidy has permitted to the detriment of our Order: we solemnly disavow every proceeding contrary to the sacred laws of our constitution: we regard as degraded from their rank and dignities, all those who drew up, accepted, or consented to the infamous treaty that surrendered Malta, as well as all those who shall be convicted of having co-

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operated

operated directly or indirectly in that work of iniquity: we renounce from this time, all sort of connection with those unworthy, infected, and corrupted members; in fine, we will never acknowledge for our brethren, any but those who shall manifest the conformity of their principles with ours, by adhering to the present protestation, which we reserve to ourselves the power of extending or renewing, according to the exigency of the case.

In testimony of which we have proposed the present act, have unanimously accepted and stamped it with the seal of the Grand Priory of Russia.

Done at St. Petersburg this day, Thursday 26th of August 1798.

*Manifesto of the Grand Priory of
Russia.*

WE have given up to public indignation the odious crime which put Malta into the hands of the French; we have promised to pursue the authors as far as our just resentment could reach them. We this day proceed to fulfil the duty imposed upon us by honour, and we only deferred so long, because we waited for the most ample information, in order to pronounce upon a fact of such importance.

It is grievous for us to denounce, as one of the prime promoters of the ruin of our Order, him whom our suffrages charged, scarcely a year ago, with the care of its preservation; but when an event, the cause of which could not exist but in the most criminal improvidence, in cowardice, or in perfidy, testifies loudly against him; when the voice of probity itself accuses him; when, in fine, his own silence furnishes a decisive presumption against him, let us not hesitate to demand from him an account of

the sacred deposit entrusted to him, and for which he was responsible to his Order and to all Europe.

A long time since the Grand Master was apprized that the armament of the French was destined against Malta. Since the month of February, we did not cease to suggest to him, both by words and writing, precautions and means of defence. He rejected all those means which reason represented to him; he lulled himself into a culpable supineness; he answered the marshal of the Order that every thing was done; and nevertheless, at the moment when the French executed their descent, he had made no preparations to receive them.

A member of the supreme council of the Order for more than twenty years, a member of the congregation of the state since the commencement of the revolution, could the Grand Master be ignorant of the details known to the lowest knight? A member of the criminal commission, which in the last days of the reign of his predecessor sat in judgment on a conspiracy framed by a person of the name of Vassallo, could he have forgotten that the chief of the conspirators

spirators answered in his presence to the last interrogatory he underwent—"If they wish to know what were our projects, let them ask Prince Camillus and Ranfinjeat; it was they who directed us." This fact is known to all Malta.

It was expected that the first act of the supreme authority, with which he was soon afterwards invested, would be to remove those two persons, so long marked with the seal of reprobation. The Grand Master did no such thing; he left to the first the exercise and command of the militia of the country, and to the second the administration of the finances of the Order. To act thus against the public voice, and with danger to the general safety, was to make himself responsible for the event. Then the militia mutinied under a chief, whose perfidy they were acquainted with, and inhumanly massacred the brave knights, whom, in their barbarous fidelity, they enveloped in the suspicions they justly conceived against Prince Camillus. Ranfinjeat caused no less disorder in the city by the movement he gave to the Jacobin party which he was so long forming, and by the

insolent manifesto he addressed to the Grand Master at the moment when the enemy landed. The Grand Master for an instant assumed an air of wrath against that traitor: he caused him to be put into a dungeon, instead of suspending him from a gibbet: in twenty-four hours afterwards he released him in order to charge him with drawing up the infamous act of the destruction of our Order and of his own eternal dishonour. Why, in his relation, dated from Trieste, does the Grand Master omit that particular? Does not this silence reveal the most scandalous weakness, or a manifest collusion with the traitors who sold Malta?

In the month of January, 1798, the Directory sent a man called Pouffieulques to organize an insurrection at Malta; he enrolled the Maltese, whose names were inscribed on the list of the French Consul; he distributed money, particularly to the commander Bardonnenche, director of the artillery; to the commander De Fai, director of the fortifications, the fountains, and cisterns; and to the commander Touffard, engineer in chief. In his above cited re-
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lation,

lation, the Grand Master expresses himself thus—"After the event the French themselves shewed a numerous list of the Maltese for a long time devoted to their enterprize." He represents this fact as unknown to him: he did know it, however, and a long time before the event. The Grand Cross denounced it to him in presenting the letters of Pouffieulques*.

With respect to being speedily attacked, the vigilance of the Grand Master should have been directed to all the objects proper to secure the surety of the island: it was his duty to visit the artillery of the place, to have the works repaired, to keep in a proper state the guns of the ramparts, to keep the bougades † charged, to inspect and exercise the militia and regular troops, to

* The letter of Bailli, Grand Prior of Champagne, dated Malta 21st June. This old man, upwards of 80 years of age, who has had for 40 years the charge of chief engineer of the order, was in the hands of the French at the moment when he denounced to public justice the infamous proceedings which put them in possession of Malta.

† Immense mortars bored in the rocks, loaded with stones, which are very effectual in repulsing a debarkation.

to teach them subordination ; to bring into the town the powder which was out of it, and to furnish the forts with ammunition of war and provisions, &c. &c. &c. Not only by his culpable carelessness did the Grand Master neglect all these objects, but he even disdained to pay the slightest attention to what the different members of the Order represented to him on that subject. M. Le Commander De Rohan, an excellent officer of artillery, who directed the last siege of Mahon, gave him several proposals, on the measures to be taken for the safety of Malta ; but he would not hear him.

If the Grand Master had not the head of a chief, he ought at least to have the soul of a soldier, and give the functions of military command to those called to it by their rank in the Order, and those others whom he had a right to nominate. By such measures as these, which the most illustrious of his predecessors did not disdain to take, the vessel of the state would have had a pilot in the midst of the passing storm by which it was agitated ; but nothing was capable of drawing him from his lethargy. From the inmost recesses of his palace, which he never

ver quitted from the moment of his election to that of his departure, but to seek for plaudits in the village festivals, the Grand Master parallised every thing, or at least, he gave no activity but to those who would betray the Order. The towns and forts were without provisions. The little ammunition which he distributed, was adulterated with earth and pounded charcoal; the carriage of the cannon broke at the first discharge, and the greatest part was without rammers. A single field-piece was not given to defend the entrenchments, where a handful of men might for eight days stop the progress of a whole army.

In fine, the very moment before the capitulation was decided upon, the marshal of the Order proposed certain means to prolong the defence, and represented the speedy arrival of the English squadron. The Grand Master rejected this advice, which would have saved the Order, and only listened to the cries of the rebels who pressed for its destruction*.

Amongst

* Extract from the letter of the marshal of the order :
 —“ I kissed his hand, weeping in despair, and said to
 him

Amongst all the facts which accuse the Grand Master, we should wish to find one which would testify in his favour; we should recite it with eagerness amid a doleful recapitulation which was so lamentable to us; but the torch of truth, borne with an impartial hand through such melancholy events, has throughout shewn Ferdinand Hompesch to have been guilty of the most stupid negligence, or to have been the accomplice of the perfidious men who have betrayed the Order.

“ 1st. In not having dismissed, from the employments which they occupied, known traitors,

him—“ Monseigneur, behold us for ever dishonoured in the face of nations; for, instead of defending ourselves till death, according to our vow, we shall only have resisted for a few hours; scarcely shall we have surrendered before the English will arrive to succour us, and then the earth will not have a gulph deep enough to bury our dishonour. Well! Monseigneur, I propose to you a last expedient, which will bring you back to your proper level, in affording you liberty to prolong our defence, and exact honourable conditions: Quit your palace immediately, already assailed by the fans-culottes, and place yourself under the two knights of LaValette, and all your other cavaliers; then you may speak freely and nobly, and if we only gain eight days, they will perhaps be sufficient for our deliverance. I could gain nothing.”

traitors, such as Prince Camillus, commanding the militia of the country; Basfredont de Ranfinjeat, administrator of finances, and now at the head of the municipality of Malta; Bardonnenche, director of the artillery, now employed in the same line in the French service; Fai, director of the fortifications, fountains, and cisterns; Touffard, chief of the engineers, and now chief of brigade in the army of Buonaparte; and his own secretary, Doublet, now secretary of the municipality.

“ 2d. By having obstinately rejected the wise measures suggested to him in word and writing by the knights pointed out by public estimation as the firmest supporters of the Order, and having given his full confidence to the commander, St. Priest, a man equally disgraced by his immorality, and his connections with the conspirators*.

“ 3d. By having left the outward towers and forts without ammunition of war, or provisions, which prevented the Maltese from occupying and defending them.

“ 4th.

* The same St. Priest is still the secretary of Hompesch, and the depositary of all his confidence.

“ 4th. By keeping himself shut up in his palace, when the most urgent necessity, and the voice of honour, called upon him to animate by his presence the courage of a people well disposed, but enervated by a long peace, and tempted by the speeches of the factious, whom his appearance would have dispersed.

“ 5th. By not having punished by instant degradation, as our laws prescribed, the example of unparalleled and scandalous cowardice given by the Bailli de St. Tropes, on the evening of the 6th of June, in deserting the post which he commanded, and taking shelter in the city, where his presence farther encouraged the trouble and discouragement of the people. This cowardly and perfidious knight, instead of being punished, sits at this time in the council of Hompesch at Trieste.

“ 6th. By suffering himself to be imposed upon by men whom his inactivity alone encouraged to make him the outrageous proposal of surrendering, before the enemy had a single piece of cannon mounted on a battery ; for having consented to demand a suspension of arms, when there had yet been
no

no fighting, and having entrusted with that commission, instead of punishing him as he deserved, a person of the name of Formosa, the Dutch Consul, and the author of the seditious assemblage with which he was surrounded.

“ 7th. By having decided on the surrender of the place and the ruin of his Order, in an incompetent council, and for having employed the most avowed enemy of the order, Ranfinjeat, to conduct the capitulation.

8th. Finally, alas! what can acquit him of this crime?—By having surrendered the strongest place in Europe, without firing a single cannon, when honour and the example of his predecessors, made it his duty to defend it to the last drop of his blood.

“ It is to be remarked, that in the infamous treaty which yielded up Malta to the French, the interests of the Grand Master were alone attended to, and nothing was stipulated in favour of the Order. The fact is explained by only this simple reflection. Ferdinand Hompesch and his agents have sold Malta, and they alone have received the

the price * ; in fact, care was taken not to summon to the council which decided on the surrender, the sixteen elders of the complete council, nor the Baillies Tignie, Gourjao, Clagny, Tillet, Bellemont, Loras, La Tour Saint Quintin, La Tour du Pin, &c. &c. which would have constituted more than half the council, and without whose consent no decision could properly have been taken. But they were very sure that those brave knights would have rejected with horror the dishonourable treaty which they were anxious to conclude, and it was found more expedient to give them up than to consult them.

“ Equally inaccessible to the unjust prejudice which fees crimes every where, and to the culpable indulgence that tolerates them, we have been guided in our researches into the events at Malta, by those principles

* See the letter of St. Priest, dated from Trieste the 4th of August, wherein he complains, that at the moment of his departure, Buonaparte signed for the Grand Master, at the request of his creditors, an order for 300,000 out of the sum of 600,000 livres, and that he was to have received it in ready money, together with 100,000 livres of his annual pension.

principles only which honour avows, and which equity prescribes. We have not advanced a fact without the proof before our eyes. Throughout the whole, truth has demonstrated to us that Ferdinand Hompesch is attainted and convicted of improvidence, cowardice, and perfidy; upon which considerations—

“ We, the knights of the Grand Priory of Russia, and others, present at St. Peterburgh, regard Ferdinand Hompesch, as deposed from the rank to which we elevated him, and by virtue of our own laws we hold ourselves absolved from the obedience which we should owe him as our chief, and we invite our brothers of the other grand priories, to unite with us in a proceeding which honour has rendered indispensable, and from which we could not abstain without participating in the opprobrium which Ferdinand Hompesch, Ranfinjeat, St. Tropes, and others, have so justly deserved.

“ We throw ourselves into the arms of our august and sovereign protector Paul I. Emperor of all the Russias, with that confidence which his justice, his sentiments, and his benevolence inspire: We humbly supplicate

supplicate His Imperial Majesty to make known to us his supreme will, to which we promise to conform, without restriction; and to extend his generous protection to all the members of our Order, who, in these unfortunate circumstances, have remained faithfully attached to the invariable bases of our institution—religion and honour.

“ Done at St. Peterburgh, Thursday the 26th of August, 1798.”

Manifesto of His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of all the Russias.

“ **W**_E, Paul the First, by the Grace of God, Emperor and Autocrator of all the Russias, &c. &c. &c. declare, that, having attentively examined the acts presented to us by the Baillies, Knights of the Grand Cross, the Commanders, and Knights of the Grand Priory of Russia, as well as the other Knights of the illustrious Order of St. John of Jerusalem, assembled in the palace of the said Priory in our Capital, acts which contain—1st. A protestation against the prejudicial conduct of Ferdinand Hompesch, heretofore Grand Master of the Order, and others, knights, who have violated their engagements in surrendering, without any defence, their principal city, and their whole state, and made a dishonourable capitulation with the Chief of the French who attacked the Island of Malta, stipulating only for the personal advantage of the Grand Master and his adherents.—2^{dly}. The confidence of the members of that Order in us, as its protector, marked by the desire that we should

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attend



attend to its preservation, and an expression of readiness to submit to any arrangements which we might think necessary to make for its benefit : We confirm the said acts in their full force, and testifying our acknowledgments for the zeal of the members of the illustrious Order of St. John of Jerusalem ; we take all the well-disposed of the corps under our supreme direction. We promise, upon our Imperial word, not only to maintain it in all its institutions, privileges, and honours, but also to employ all means in our power for its re-establishment in the respectable state which it held, and in which it contributed to the advantage of Christianity in general, and of every well-governed state in particular. We have also ordered all our ministers, in foreign courts, to give in our name the most formal assurances, that, in taking the illustrious Order of St. John of Jerusalem under our direction, we mean not to raise any pretension, which, under whatever denomination it may be, could in any way operate to the prejudice of their rights. In thus explaining our intentions, founded in justice, we enjoin the members of that Order, now residing in our capital (which

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should

Letters on the real causes and probable consequences of the present war
with Russia

London 1801

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